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Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Nineteenth session

Summary record (partial)* of the 395th meeting**
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 9 March 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Degener

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.
** No summary records were issued for the 381st to 394th meetings.

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The discussion covered in the summary record began at 5 p.m.

Other matters

1. **Mr. Araya** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, at its nineteenth session, the Committee had adopted concluding observations in relation to the initial reports of Haiti, Nepal, Oman, the Russian Federation, Seychelles, Slovenia, and the Sudan. It had also adopted lists of issues under the simplified reporting procedure in relation to Costa Rica, New Zealand, Paraguay and the Republic of Korea. In addition, the Committee had considered two communications submitted under the Optional Protocol to the Convention and had found violations of the Convention in both cases. The Committee had also adopted its general comment No. 6 on article 5 of the Convention and had endorsed a draft general comment on articles 4 (3) and 33 (3) of the Convention. A call for written submissions from all interested stakeholders would be issued, with a deadline of 15 May 2018.

2. The Committee had adopted statements on the New Urban Agenda and the International Day of Sign Languages and a joint declaration with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions on national monitoring of the implementation of article 19 of the Convention. It had decided to amend its methods of work to clarify the matter of confidentiality for third parties that it invited to participate in private meetings. The Committee had adopted a report on follow-up activities in relation to concluding observations and had decided to put such activities on hold while it identified priority recommendations to be made in all concluding observations. It had also adopted a follow-up report on views on communications. Furthermore, the Committee had welcomed the decision of the United Nations Office at Geneva to produce documents in easy-read formats. Lastly, the Committee had adopted the report on its nineteenth session.

3. **Ms. Quan-Chang** (International Disability Alliance (IDA)) said that her organization welcomed the adoption of general comment No. 6. However, it was regrettable that the multiple and intersectional discrimination faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex persons with disabilities was only mentioned once in the text. IDA also welcomed the progress made in drafting a new general comment on articles 4 (3) and 33 (3) and was ready to offer its support.

4. IDA was pleased to note that candidates for the upcoming election of Committee members had been asked to complete a biographical data form, which would provide information that was more relevant to their roles as potential members than a simple curriculum vitae. States parties should consider nominating women with disabilities with a view to achieving gender parity within the Committee. They should also consider making their nominations and their voting decisions in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities. In relation to the Committee's work with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, IDA called upon all States parties that had not yet introduced an independent monitoring mechanism in line with article 33 (2) of the Convention to do so without delay, in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities.

5. IDA was pleased to note that webcasts of the Committee's meetings had been made available with interpretation in international and national sign languages and, when appropriate, in languages other than the six working languages of the United Nations and that organizations of persons with disabilities had been able to take part in the Committee's work remotely via video link. The news that the Committee would extend the length of its sessions in the future was also welcome; however, any extension in length would need to be accompanied by an increase in resources so that longer sessions remained fully accessible.

6. **Ms. Rodríguez** (Colombian Coalition for the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) said that the Coalition welcomed the Committee's adoption of general comment No. 6, but wished to note that the document failed to include explicit mention of the multiple discrimination faced by persons with disabilities whose sexual orientation or gender identity was not heteronormative. General statements on protections, guarantees and non-discrimination were not enough; States parties should be expressly reminded of their obligation to adapt their legislation and practices to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons with disabilities were able to fully exercise their rights, including their sexual and reproductive rights and their right to form a family.

The Committee should make it clear that States parties had an obligation to provide protection for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons with disabilities in relation to all the rights established under the Convention, with a view to ensuring the material equality of all citizens.

7. **Ms. Parra** (Colombian Coalition for the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), speaking on behalf of the Sexual Rights Initiative, the Centre for Reproductive Rights, AboSex and the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, said that she wished to commend the adoption of general comment No. 6. She also wished to highlight the importance of recognizing intersectional discrimination against and violation of the sexual and reproductive rights of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, as violations of article 5 of the Convention. In addition, however, the Committee should recognize and address other, ongoing violations of Convention rights on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, such as forced participation in so-called "conversion therapies", pathologization and forced institutionalization and psychiatric treatment. The Committee should join the other committees of the treaty body system in making explicit reference to the need to protect the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. She urged the Committee to encourage groups of persons with disabilities who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex to participate in its work and to share their experiences with regard to the discrimination they faced. She also urged it to continue advancing gender parity in its membership.

Future meetings

8. **Mr. Araya** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Committee had decided that its twentieth session would take place from 27 August to 21 September 2018 and would be followed by the tenth meeting of the pre-sessional working group, from 24 to 28 September 2018. During the twentieth session, the Committee would consider reports from Algeria, Bulgaria, Malta, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Committee had also decided to adopt lists of issues under the simplified reporting procedure in relation to Austria, Azerbaijan, Germany, Mongolia and Sweden and to adopt a list of issues in relation to Iraq. The pre-sessional working group had been requested to adopt lists of issues in relation to the Niger, Norway, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Turkey and Vanuatu. The permanent missions of those States parties would be informed accordingly.

Closure of the session

9. After the customary exchange of courtesies, **the Chair** declared the nineteenth session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities closed.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.